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Message Text

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73
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 NEA-10 OMB-01 DRC-01 /148 W
---------- 126538
R 311716Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2004

UNCLAS OTTAWA 2583

E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: CANADIAN REACTION TO US MILITARY ALERT

REF: OTTAWA 2584

FOLLOWING IS PERTINENT PORTION OF CHARLES LYNCH COLUMN ON SUBJECT APPEARING IN OTTAWA CITIZEN OCTOBER 30:

BEGIN QUOTE: HEADLINE - UNSTABLE ALLIANCE

TEXT - USUALLY THERE'S A HOWL FROM CANADA WHEN THE UNITED STATES DOES SOMETHING THAT COULD HURT US, WITHOUT CONSULTING.
LAST WEEK, WHEN PRESIDENT NIXON ORDERED U.S. TROOPS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD INTO A STATE OF ALERT, HE DIDN'T CONSULT.
BUT THERE WAS NO HOWL FROM CANADA--EVEN THOUGH THE FORCES NIXON ALERTED INCLUDED THOSE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND, IN WHICH WE ARE PARTNERS WITH THE U.S.
THERE'S BEEN NO HOWL BECAUSE IN THIS INSTANCE CONSULTATION WOULD HAVE REQUIRED THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO INFORM WASHINGTON THAT, IN THE CANADIAN OPINION, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS LOSING HIS GRIP. NOT ONLY WOULD WE HAVE REFUSED TO JOIN NIXON'S ALERT, BUT OUR FAILURE TO DO SO WOULD HAVE ADVERTISED TO THE WORLD THAT WASHINGTON'S CLOSEST ALLY DIDN'T BELIEVE WHAT WASHINGTON WAS SAYING ABOUT THE SOVIET THREAT TO WORLD PEACE.
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AS IT WAS, THE AMERICAN COMPONENT OF NORAD STOOD UP AT

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NIXON'S COMMAND, WHILE THE CANADIAN COMPONENT SAT DOWN. HAD NIXON REQUESTED THAT THE CANADIAN INTERCEPTORS ON NORAD DUTY BE ARMED WITH THEIR NUCLEAR-TIPPED ROCKETS, OUR GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE REFUSED.

OUR OFFICIAL THINKING, UNOFFICIALLY EXPRESSED, APPEARS TO BE THAT NIXON OVERREACTED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THAT HE DID SO FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS.

TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT, THAT IS DISTURBING ENOUGH. MORE DISTURBING IS THE INDICATION THAT EVENTS AT HOME HAVE IMPAIRED THE JUDGMENT OF NIXON AND HIS ADVISORS--AND NIXON IS THE MAN WHO HAS HIS FINGER ON THE NUCLEAR BUTTON.

UNSTABLE PARTY - IF NIXON COULD ACT CONVULSIVELY AND UNILATERALLY AS HE DID LAST WEEK, WHAT MIGHT HE DO NEXT TIME? WHAT HAPPENS TO A MILITARY ALLIANCE WHEN ONE OF THE PARTIES TO IT GOES UNSTABLE?

CANADA ISN'T THE ONLY U.S. ALLY PONDERING THE QUESTION; IT'S BEING ASKED IN OTHER NATO CAPITALS AS WELL. WHEN NIXON PUT THE U.S. FORCES ON ALERT HE DIDN'T CONSULT ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT. AMERICAN TROOPS IN GERMANY WERE ALERTED WITHOUT THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT KNOWING ABOUT IT, AND THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT, STRONGLY COMMITTED TO EAST-WEST DETENTE, WAS NOT AMUSED.

NOR WAS THAT ALL. NIXON PROCEEDED WITH HIS ARMS SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL WITHOUT CONSULTING HIS MILITARY ALLIES, AND IT APPEARS HE TOOK MATERIAL FROM STOCKPILES COMMITTED TO NATO IN ORDER TO DO SO.

NIXON CAN ARGUE THAT THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR WESTERN SECURITY RESTS WITH HIM, AND THAT, IN HIS OWN WORDS, 'WHEN I HAVE TO FACE AN INTERNATIONAL CRISIS, I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.'

THE FACT IS THAT WHEN HE FACES AN INTERNATIONAL CRISIS, REAL OR IMAGINED, THE WHOLE WORLD FACES IT WITH HIM, AND HIS ALLIES WERE NOT IMPRESSED BY THE WAY HE HACKED IT LAST WEEK. THAT INCLUDES CANADA.

WHILE OUR DEFENCE LEADERS ARE MOPPING THEIR BROWS OVER THAT NEAR MISS, THEY ARE SCROUNGING AROUND TRYING TO FIND THE HANDLE ON THE REQUEST OF UN SECRETARY GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM THAT CANADA PROVIDE THE GUTS OF THE NEW UNITED NATIONS PEACE FORCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END QUOTE.

SCHMIDT

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